



**State of Delaware
Office of the Governor**

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**Minner, Markell & Baker Launch Delaware's Earned
Income Tax Credit Campaign**

Millions of Unclaimed Dollars Could Go To Delaware Families

Stanton – Governor Ruth Ann Minner was joined today by State Treasurer Jack Markell and Wilmington Mayor James Baker to launch a statewide campaign to encourage low and moderate income working families to take advantage of millions of dollars available through the federal Earned Income Tax Credit.

During a press conference at ShopRite in Stanton, Gov. Minner pointed out that the goal of the campaign is to increase the number of Delaware residents who file for the federal Earned Income Tax Credit, or EITC. A related goal is to increase the number of people who receive free tax filing assistance so they do not have to pay exorbitant fees to tax preparation firms.

“The EITC is a tax benefit for working people who earn less than \$33,178 a year, Gov. Minner said. “It reduces the tax burden on these workers, supplements their wages and helps families pay bills or save for the future. EITC refunds can be up to \$4,140 per year, depending on family size and income.”

The Delaware Earned Income Tax Credit Campaign also will help workers claim the credit by offering free tax help sites throughout the state starting January 15, 2003.

“We’ll help workers with household incomes below \$34,000 prepare and electronically file their federal and state income tax returns and claim significant refunds through the federal Earned Income Tax Credit,” said Jack Markell. “Workers who think they earn too little to file tax returns could gain the most from this service by collecting hefty refunds from Uncle Sam.”

“The city government is proud to be part of a statewide effort to educate citizens about the Earned Income Tax Credit which is an especially important issue for Wilmington citizens,” Wilmington Mayor James M. Baker said. “Many EITC eligible wage earners live in our city. They will now have a chance to increase their family’s income and their personal buying power. I am honored to join Governor Minner and State Treasurer Markell as a co-chair of this

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important information and education campaign that will be extremely beneficial for people in Wilmington and throughout Delaware.”

E-filing provides the highest degree of speed, accuracy and security in filing tax returns. Workers can speed the process of their refund by e-filing their return and by arranging for a direct deposit into a bank account.

The Delaware Earned Income Tax Credit Campaign has been working closely with local employers, civic groups, religious organizations and the IRS to recruit and train 250 qualified volunteers to prepare taxes as part of the IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. At several tax sites, customers also will be able to open PNC savings accounts on the spot. Information also will be provided on financial education workshops and state programs that could help workers save on daily expenses such as health care benefits for children, fuel assistance and food stamps.

The tax sites, which are hosted by 12 non-profit organizations in Wilmington, Newark, Middletown, Dover, Milford, Georgetown and Seaford will have regular hours throughout tax season. The Delaware HelpLine **1-800-464-4357** will be available to tax payers to provide them with scheduling other basic information regarding the campaign and tax preparation.